

EVERGREEN • EAST HILLS VISION STRATEGY

Summary of General Community Meeting September 6, 2005

A Community meeting was held to discuss the Evergreen East Hills Vision Strategy on September 6, 2005 in the LeyVa Middle School Gymnasium, 1865 Monrovia Drive, San José. The community meeting started at 7:00 p.m. and concluded at 9:15 p.m.

Agenda Items Covered

The community meeting was conducted in accordance with the agenda, which is available from the Evergreen•East Hills Vision Strategy website.

Councilmember and Evergreen East Hills Task Force Chairperson Dave Cortese welcomed the community to the meeting. A brief orientation to the meeting's agenda was given by the facilitator Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies. Laurel Prevetti, Deputy Director of City of San José, for an introduction to the Evergreen East Hills Vision Strategy. Ms. Prevetti provided information on the background and purpose of the effort, the Evergreen East Hills study area and applicable products expected from the Vision Strategy effort. Ms. Prevetti also covered for the community, the vision and expected outcomes from the task force and City Council. A copy of written materials on the Vision and Expected Outcomes which were provided to those attending the community meeting is available from the Evergreen•East Hills Vision Strategy website. Ms. Prevetti then discussed the schedule for achieving the vision and expected outcomes. A copy of the Work Plan approved by the San José City Council on June 21, 2005 is available from the Evergreen•East Hills Vision Strategy website. John Baty, City of San José, then provided information on certain development applications presently on file with the City of San José. Mr. Baty presented information on the General Plan amendments and Planned Development zoning applications in connection with those pending development applications. A summary of the major pending development applications discussed by Mr. Baty is available from the Evergreen•East Hills Vision Strategy website. Ms. Prevetti then presented the outreach strategy the City of San José is following in order to maximize valuable community input. A general public comment session preceded the adjournment of the meeting at approximately 9:15 p.m.

Public Comments

Though the agenda provided for public comment toward the end of the meeting, the attending members of the community were encouraged to comment or ask questions throughout the presentations. All of the public comments and questions, whether during presentations or as part of the concluding open public comment, are set out below. They are separated by reference to the agenda

items being presented or discussed when the question or comment was made. Almost all questions posed by the community members were responded to or answered in the course of the meeting. Those responses and answers to them are also set out below.

Comment/Question	Response/Answer
2. Introduction to the Evergreen East Hills Vision Strategy.	
Why are no schools listed on the “amenities” list?	Schools are not an “amenity,” they are required.
What does “in-fill” mean?	In certain neighborhoods, in-fill is encouraged and “automatic.” That is not the case in the Evergreen East Hills study area. This is an area that is impacted by any development and there are policies in place that cover even the small in-fill lots.
I received a letter about some “rezoning campus industrial.” What does the letter mean?	This is part of the early notification process, to let people know sooner than later that some zoning change is being sought in their neighborhood. Sometimes developers will hold their own meetings. However, the final decision on any such rezoning change is the City Council’s.
Are the development applications stalled or shelved?	No, they are moving in parallel with the Vision Strategy process.
Campus Industrial – What has changed so that it no longer makes sense?	The economy has changed and there is pressure from the property owners to modify the development restrictions on their properties. This is a key question that must be balanced with other community needs. The City Council will need to consider and balance all the interests.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

What efforts have been made with Caltrans to address the traffic issues on Highway 101?

Nothing much happening at the state level. Money is not currently flowing from the state for transportation improvements. The City has advanced the Highway 101 area on the list. The Vision Strategy process is an opportunity to explore alternative funding sources.

What about additional schools?

Schools are part of the balance that the vision process seeks. There will be negotiation on sources of payment for school land and the money for school needs. The City will work with school districts on this.

What is the timeline?

In May or June 2006 the San José City Council will render its final decision. However, it may be years before any actual construction starts.

What is the timing of the Highway 101 and the planned campus industrial development close to the hill? There is concern there may be mudslides.

The timing of Highway 101 work and residential development is being discussed late this month (September) or next month at the Task Force meeting. The EIR which is underway will examine geological instability and the potential for landslides.

Is one of the possible outcomes "no development?"

Yes.

What is the possibility of no development.

That will depend on community input and is a City Council decision.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

There is a feeling that Evergreen is already too crowded. There are no plans for light rail or transit oriented development. More development will burden the residents of the Evergreen East Hills even more. If more development was voted on, it would lose. Are we wasting our time in this visioning process?

No. We are recording the comments and they will all make it all the way to the City Council. Your time here is well spent and appreciated.

3. Vision and Expected Outcome

Can we do a vote by show of hands regarding support for the idea of development by those attending the meeting?

Yes. Vote was taken and it was approximately 40% of those at the meeting willing to consider development and continue to discuss the balance of issues and 60% against further development of the area.

4. Work Plan (Schedule)

On the work plan which was handed out, there is a reference to November/December hearings. What is that?

That refers to progress reports to the City Council. There can't and won't be a final decision until the EIR is complete.

Does the City of San José Planning Commission only have night meetings?

Yes.

When will the EIR be done?

The draft EIR will be available for review and comment in January 2006. It will be available on the web, in libraries and other sites. The EIR will not be final until it is certified. That is anticipated in May 2006. The certification can be appealed, so it could go even longer.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

How long will the Evergreen East Valley Task Force study the EIR?

In the Work Plan, the Task Force is scheduled to begin its review of the EIR on January 18, 2005 it could take several Task Force meetings to complete.

Planning Commission dates are not on the Work Plan schedule.

They have a limited role in this process their role will really focus on traffic and land use issues and they are tentatively scheduled to discuss it in May 2006. Housing, Senior, Parks Commissions will weigh in as well next spring.

What is going to happen with the Pleasant Hills Golf Club?

First, that property would have to be annexed; currently the golf course is zoned "private open space." The question of how much should be remaining in open space after development is not resolved.

How can the Council do that?

The City Council has the power annex and change the zoning.

Schools should be split out in the work plan, as should other needs such as utilities. Affordable housing is not prevalent in City Council District Eight. How will affordable housing be sited?

The City has subsidized and been very aggressive in getting affordable housing. However, State and Federal money to provide affordable housing has been shrinking. We are looking at local money. This is very complex and it may require some affordable housing on all sites. However, that will impact the fiscal plan and then, that could impact the amenities.

How are the developers moving this without site control?

Some parcels are controlled and all will be studied. Control of some may go past June 2006 and zoning may lag too.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

There is concern over park space and the Golf Course. Has there been an effort to find another owner for the Golf Course?

No. The prior Evergreen Visioning Task Force tried to find City and County money to buy the course. However, there were not sufficient funds to execute a transaction. Therefore, now negotiating open space as a condition of development is one suggested approach being studied.

Didn't see Transit Oriented Development (TOD) near the light rail line; is that possible on the Arcadia property? We need open space too.

We will discuss that in the context of the next agenda item. The City and the developers acknowledge the concept of the efficient use of density and open space.

There was concern about developers funding of the process. A speaker did not think developers should develop community amenities. Concern about Evergreen and how three and four story buildings would impact the rural atmosphere. Urge consideration for the neighbors.

Who is funding the EIR?

The developers of the properties pay the costs consistent with City policy but the consultants doing the EIR will work for City staff. The City Will meet the letter of the law and would be the party people would sue so it is in the City's best interest to do a good job.

Most community members don't believe in a three-legged stool concept.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer****5. Development Applications on File****Arcadia Property**

High density of Arcadia property because of the proximity of the light rail line – Transit Oriented Development. On 81 acres, 1,075 units is a lot more than others, even with the amount of land less. Some of us bought as single family too. We were not looking for six or seven story buildings.

Reid Hillview Airport is nearby and there have been complaints of homes in the airport flight path. Have you thought about this?

Another speaker “seconded” the first comment above about the impacts of the Arcadia development, stating that neighbors of the proposed development would be taking more than their share.

Pleasant Hills Golf Course

What is the amount of park space?

Mr. Cortese mentioned 30 to 40 percent open space. Will it come back?

The ratio should be more balanced.

Yes. The City is working with the airport to analyze how development can be accommodated on the remainder of the property that isn't in the flight path.

Five acres is near the school site and there is additional open space.

This needs to be worked through if it is important to the community.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

What is the school site designation? What is the significance of "825." Please remember that the "old" Task Force studied and narrowed down units and had commercial and open space. Why is it different now?

Developers were observing the old Task Force and were aware of what they considered. What has changed is that when the developers filed for development, it is up to them. The information presented tonight is what's on file but it could still be negotiated.

If the property owners along each parcel signed against the project, would that make a difference?

It would influence but would not control the decision of the City Council. The Developer must survey the opinion of those near the site. That will be taken into account, as well as, the opinion of the broader community.

EIR questions: Which areas studied? Which intersections? Things are at "F" and worse today. When does annexation take place? Why is Pleasant Hills only one alternative and not several? What is the park acreage?

There will be 90 plus Intersections studied and the area is broader than study area, specific traffic information will be provided at future meetings and on the website. Annexation will occur at or after zoning approval. The Developer's application is only one scenario – it does not cover the variety of alternatives.

Campus Industrial Properties

Legacy property – road being built? What is going on?

It is for tanks for reclaimed water.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

There are substandard streets near the IDS property. Will the new neighborhoods have narrow streets too? The existing school is a national Blue Ribbon School, full of achievers. How will the school not be compromised? Currently only two exits form the neighborhood. Is this going to be corrected? A fourteen mile commute takes an hour and ten minutes now. High-end homeowners will move.

The old EIR for Evergreen indicated that larger lots were preferable with a lower impact on schools. The same EIR should be valid now – 30% reverse commute was also expected. A baseball field is not preferred, park space would be better.

What is economy of scale to get the investment back?

Transportation improvements are needed, specifically out near the Berg property. Will leave if it is developed? Is the East boundary of the property firm?

The old EIR is there and will be examined as part of this process as well.

A financially feasible plan is a key outcome. Single family development of this area is still desirable and will be studied. Maintaining the quality of life is key.

Yes, the East boundary is fixed.

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

Comments from a small developer/property owner who has had the parcel since 1970. Stressed need for additional capacity for in-fill parcels. Some people do want the baseball fields. Needs have to be balanced. Don't look at developers as all big guys.

Evergreen Valley College

Density here is highest of all. How does it compare?

Yes, it is higher and there is commercial development proposed.

Will the density of people be considered? Don't think it can be sustained?

Yes, it will be studied in the EIR, specifically including the traffic impact analysis.

A person who lives and works at Evergreen is disappointed with the College. Everything is being developed. The College should have more vision and a buffer and open space should not be given up. The City Council should pass on what's on the green sheet (the Summary of Major Development Applications). This is the consistent opinion of City residents.

Representatives of the 18 acre parcel on San Felipe Road (for twenty-five years) wants to increase allocation to thirty-six units or more.

Representative of two acres also on San Felipe wants some allocations as well.

Post Meeting Comments

Comment/Question**Response/Answer**

Representative of two acres on San Felipe Road, who has been there twenty-six years, also desires additional allocation. The growth could have been stopped, but they didn't do that; people need to live somewhere. However, to maintain the property and to protect neighbors, the representative requested an allocation of similar density to what is proposed for the developers' sites.

Deal with existing traffic and schools issues before considering additional housing.

Regarding the Evergreen Valley Community College property, four stories is too high. That is too much change.

When will amenities be sited on specific sites?

This will be added to the work plan for Task Force and committee meetings.

Is Pleasant Hills Golf Course the NE notch in the development site? Or not?

Prepared By: Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies